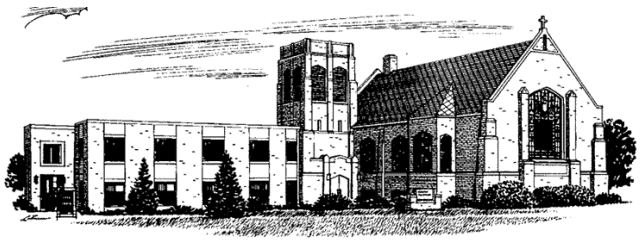

SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook: www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Margaret Froehlich, Administrative Assistant
Megan Savage Financial Secretary
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org
Emily Gaul, Child Care

Sundays at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

Summers (thru Labor Day weekend):
9:30 Holy Communion
Childcare provided
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Rev. Whayne Hougland, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!

February 2020

You may have seen the phrase "wiggles welcome" printed on the sign with some activities on Christmas Eve when no childcare was provided. Borrowed from another congregation, this phrase fits well the welcome at Saron on any given day. The phrase printed on Christmas Eve preceded the note that we love our children in worship but if for any reason you choose to step out with your child, here are some activities for your use.

Yes, wiggles are welcome. We love the wiggles that come with babies and young children. We love the wiggles that come with the occasional cry or squeal. We love the wiggles that come as children learn what it means to worship and are taught the faith. We love the wiggles that happen before they run down the aisle for the children's message. We are also aware that at times parents, for a variety of reasons, may choose to step out with their child and place them in the nursery or spend a moment in the narthex before returning to worship.

Thank you for being a community of faith where wiggles are welcome as we grow in faith, "younger and older" together.

Pastor Joan

ASH WEDNESDAY
February 26, 2020
12:15 & 7:00 PM

Imposition of Ashes
and Holy Communion

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

We remember in our thoughts and prayers:
Arla Huelsberg is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Bernice Koski** is at Woodland Terrace; **Virginia Anserello** is at Pine Ridge, Stevensville.

Office Hours at Saron
Margaret (secretary): Mon-Tues, 9 AM - 1 PM
Weds of Newsletter Week, 9 AM - 1 PM
Volunteers: Weds, 9:30 AM - 11 AM+
Financial Secretary: Megan Savage
Call the office for more information.
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (983.1273) or contacting the president of the congregation.
Note: E-mails meant for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org. E-mails to Margaret and the church office should be addressed to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members in February 2020

Feb. 2 - Lindsay Gilmore-Gaspari
3 - Makayla Bradley
5 - Jerry Stelling
Erin Vollmer
6 - Linda Dipert
Mary Alice Brunner
8 - Ernst Knauf
Krystina Walker
9 – Frieda Williams
10 - Aiden Ashley
12 - Virginia Anserello
15 - Robert King
21 - Ryan Talbert
22 - Darlene Kiessel
26 - Wendy King

For additions or corrections, please call the church office at 983-1273. Thank you.

Welcome to Emmie Laurine Carter who was baptized on December 22

and Lori Jean Haney who was baptized on January 26.

We offer God's blessings on Milo Burk.

Thank you to Connie Slater who designed and created our beautiful new Christmas banners.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome into our fellowship, Ken and Suzy Kohs as well as Ted and Ann Dosch, as Saron members.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship. We meet in the sanctuary.

Happy New Year! What will 2020 bring in regards to Fortify & Fly? Well, some projects are firmly identified like continuing to sleuth out the leak in the sanctuary and preparing for the upcoming maintenance on our stained glass windows (possibly as early as mid-February!). Other projects are in earlier phases like the Worship Committee starting conversations about enhancing the worship space, especially in regard to accessibility. Projects like that one can be more complex and it will take input from a variety of groups and members of the congregation to ensure success. How can you help? It's important that we do our best to stay informed by reading the monthly newsletters and attending meetings like the Saron Annual Meeting on January 26th. That way, when our voices, time and/or talents are needed, we'll be ready!

As of the end of December 2019, we had collected $204,669 towards our 3 year pledge total of $371,165. We are now officially 1/3 of the way through our 3 year capital campaign and have collected 55% of the total amount pledged. Hooray! Why is it important? We made the decision early in the process to move forward with implementation on projects only when we have the cash flow to pay for them without loans. That means the rate at which we collect against the pledge amounts directly impacts how quickly we can make improvements. We are doing fantastic! Thank you for all your support in 2019. We look forward to continuing this journey together into the new year!

Worship

FACEBOOK

We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sunday, Feb. 2 –
Presentation of Our Lord
Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 84
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

Sunday, Feb. 9 –
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]
Psalm 112:1-9
1 Corinthians 2:1-16
Matthew 5:13-20

Sunday, Feb. 16 –
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Psalm 119:1-8
1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Matthew 5:21-37

Sunday, Feb. 23 –
Transfiguration of Our Lord
Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 2
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9

Wednesday Feb 26 –
Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Nursery News

A few long time helpers have decided to retire from this duty so we really could use a few people to join us. If you can only serve certain months we can make that work. We currently have an every other month rotation for second service but it would be great to extend that and to bring the early service up to that. Sometimes there are no children at early nursery so you may not have duty and join worship. Please let Marilyn Lucy, Krin Jurgensen, or Pastor Oleson know you are willing to help.

2020 FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2020 flower calendar is posted. Cost: $25.00/vase. This is an opportunity for you to give flowers in honor or memory of someone. The church orders the flowers (unless you indicate otherwise) and you can take the flowers home after 2nd service.

PARKING

During the cold and wintry months, please consider leaving the parking spaces closest to Saron for those who find it most difficult to navigate the snow and ice. This, even as we try to have our walks and parking spaces clear! Thanks!

Youth

Are you in grades 6-12? Please join us for youth group activities! The Youth Group's Annual Swimming Party was a success! The kids want to thank Matt & Amanda Bradley for making it happen. As you can see, they went deep to get a good picture! For more info, contact Scott at *scottgaspari@outlook.com or (Cell) 847-373-8825.*

Learning

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

SUNDAY LEARNING HOUR NEWS

There are learning groups for ages 3-adult on Sundays at 9:40. This includes younger youth, confirmation aged youth (gr. 6-8), high school youth, and adults. The adult forum continues their series on St. Augustine's Confessions, a series from Great Courses. Newcomers are always welcome

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast

On Saturday, February 1st, Saron Men's Monthly Devotion and Breakfast group will meet at the Galley Grill on Red Arrow Highway in Stevensville at 9:00 am. The Galley Grill is on the Super 8 Motel property at 4296 Red Arrow Highway just north of the Tyler Honda car dealership. We welcome new participants

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study

Bible Study will continue our study of Revelation with it ending on February 18. We will then not meet during lent. Our Bible study will resume on April 14 (the Tuesday after Easter). For more information call Bob Kynast at 269-921-2786 or Don Hafer at 269-985-3637. Saron's Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study meets at 6:00pm at the church. At 7:00pm we adjourn for a time of fellowship. All men are invited to join us. As the Bible says "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17).
Bob Kynast bobkynast@gmail.com

THURSDAY MORNING STUDY

The study will continue, Entitled "Entering the Passion *of* Jesus," this 6-week study takes us on a step-by-step journey through the last day of Jesus. And, it will help us look at the passion of Jesus through Jewish eyes.

Themes included are:
The Last Supper: Risking the Loss of Friends – February 6; and Gethsemane: Risking Temptation – February 13. The learner guide for this 6-week study is $9.00. They will be available in the narthex. The group meets on Thursdays from 9:30-11:00. Join us for good discussion, friendship, and learning.

EPHESUS STUDY GROUP

The Ephesus group will not meet in February due to scheduling conflicts. Instead, the group will meet again on Sunday, March 22 at the home of Brad and Marilyn Frey, beginning at 5:00. We will complete Session three of the study series in the November 19, 2019 issue of Gather magazine, titled "Stewarding the Gift of Joy." The description of the study says "In the God who has redeemed us from despair, we find true, inescapable joy." If anyone would like to try out this group to see if it fits for you, you would be welcome.

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

February 9th (note: second Sunday), 6:30 in the upstairs lounge, we will tackle "Killers of the Flower Moon: the Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI", by David Grann. The content of the novel is as every bit involved as the title suggests. Amazon's description sums it up accurately. " A twisting, haunting true-life murder mystery about one of the most monstrous crimes in American history." It is a searing indictment of the callousness and prejudice toward American Indians. Join the discussion to find out what we didn't learn in American History class.

On Sunday March 1, same time, same place, the book discussion will center on "The Story of Arthur Truluv", by Elizabeth Berg. This is Berg at her best. "An emotionally powerful novel about the people who each lose the one they love most, only to find second chances where they least expect them". (Amazon) Reading this book will remind us what it means to be truly human. -

If you love to read and talk about books, we'd love to have you join us for both discussions. All are welcome. Questions? Call Kathy Cowall (269-428-0354 or kcowall@Hotmail.com "Once you read a book you care about, some part of it is always with you". (Louis L'Amour)

Women of the ELCA.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah Circle will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 12, 2020, at the church in the lounge. Linda Pater will be the study leader.

Singers and Listeners

Singers and Listeners are welcome! The Fifth "Almost" Annual Dorcas Circle Hymn Sing, February 16th at 3:45 p.m. at Saron.

Hospitality

Sign Up for Refreshments

Please consider signing up for refreshments to be served after worship on Sundays. There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex bulletin board.

Support

A Special Message for Travelers and Those Who Prefer Electronic Giving

Saron offers the option to give electronically for your convenience. Please contact the church office if you have any questions or to enroll. Thanks.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, e-mail Matt Bradley to receive the account number for which the shares will be transferred to. Once the transaction has been completed, e-mail Matt Bradley the name of the stock, the number of shares, and the date of the transfer. This allows the transaction to be completed and ensures it is included on your giving statement. Thanks! Matt Bradley, treasurer

Outreach

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

A task force at Saron has been looking at issues of welcome and inclusivity and how to best live into our mission of "joyfully sharing God's love for all!!!"

As noted, the task force is working toward the possibility of Saron becoming a Reconciling In Christ congregation, that is a congregation intentional in its welcome of those in the LGBTQIA+ community. During the months ahead we will be offering opportunities and resources that will help open our hearts and minds to what that means. This month's clunky question is: *"I don't 'get' transgender."* You can see the video clip that addresses that question at https://youtu.be/8jRBfekOjPQ is approximately 4 minutes in length.

We also have available at Saron's kiosk several resources that can help individuals further explore various topics and aid in our conversations and welcoming. Serving on the task force are Kati and Nick Hooper, Laurel Gacek, Laura Hicks, Darlene Kiessel and Pastor. Contact any of these folks if you would like to know more or be part of the conversation.

GOOD GIFTS

A total of $990.00 worth of animals and other services were purchased in our Good Gifts Project prior to Christmas. Thank you to all who helped enrich people's lives with the gift of hope that comes through a pig or a goat or school supplies.

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN

On December 26th 123 people enjoyed a ham dinner prepared & served by members of Saron.
Our cooks & servers the day after Christmas were Matt & Mia Bradley, Preston Akers, Ruth Ball, Jan & Tom Taylor, and Dave & Kathie Bradley.

The Soup Kitchen is open 7 days a week, every day of the year. Hunger in our community is an ongoing concern. Thank you for supporting Saron in this outreach opportunity as a part of the ELCA's mission of *God's Gifts, Our Hands!*

Large cans of fruit are always needed at the Soup Kitchen & can be dropped off anytime at the church. Any questions or to volunteer or provide cookies please contact Kathie Bradley at 269- 921-4665.

Interfaith Action
SW Michigan Peace & Justice Collaborative

You are invited to attend the general meeting of the Interfaith Action Collaborative that will meet February 18th at 6 p.m. at First Congregational Church (2100 Niles Avenue, St Joseph). At this time plans for 2020 will be presented and discussed. The purpose of this collaborative of faith communities is to provide a mechanism for ongoing interfaith discussion, education, and action. More information can be found at https://swmichinterfaith.org/

TIME TO RENEW "LIVING LUTHERAN" MAGAZINE

"*Living Lutheran,"* the magazine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, keeps us informed of events and issues impacting Lutherans. Subscribers also have access online to more than 9,000 archived articles and 400 Study guides. Those that have been enjoying *"Living Lutheran"* this past year or those who would like to begin receiving *"Living Lutheran"* will be able to purchase or renew for the price of $9.00 a year.

Please make out a check to Saron and write "Living Lutheran" in the memo area of your check or place cash in an envelope clearly identified with your name, the amount enclosed and the words *"Living Lutheran."* This can be handed in to the office or placed in the offering plate. We want to get all of the subscriptions in as soon as possible so that there will be no lapse in current subscriptions.

Facilities

WILL YOU VACUUM?

Our cleaning service attends to Saron's needs every other week. On the off-week, especially during the winter months, a vacuum of the sanctuary, narthex, and entry way is needed. Are you available and willing to do this? A sign-up sheet is available. Preferred vacuum times are between 8 pm on Thursday and Saturday evening. Thank you!

Council News

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our newly elected council members. They are Molly Becker, Brad Frey (2nd term), Krin Jurgensen, Scott Kohs, and Jim Manore.

Watch for a full list of council members and their designated area of responsibility in next month's newsletter.

SPAGHETTI DINNER FUNDRAISER

Countryside Academy is hosting a spaghetti benefit dinner for one of their teachers, and Saron member, Jim Hicks. Jim is in need of a kidney tranplant. The benefit will be held at the Meadowbrook Campus, 4800 Meadowbrook Drive, 49022 from 4-7 pm on February 22. Tickets will be available for sale at the Medaowbrook Campus for $5 per person, 4 years and younger are free.

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

February 2020

We're on Facebook! Like us at
www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

Saron 2020
February Volunteer Schedule

	February 2 **Presentation of Our Lord**		**February 9** **Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**		**February 16** **Sixth Sunday after Epiphany**		**February 23** **Transfiguration of Our Lord**	
	8:30	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**
Assisting Minister	Pauline Ngonyani	Scott Kohs	Wendy King	Connor Ashley	Eric Standen	Denise Cook	Marilyn Frey	Bill Oleson
Reader/ Comm.Asst	Eric Standen	Dan Fortenbacher	Jim Manore	Darlene Kiessel	Sally Schmuhl	Matt Bradley	Steve Bell	Karen Johnson
Ushers	Keith Stevens & Steve Bell	John Olson & Krin Jurgensen	Fran Richards & Elizabeth Kunkel	Laura Kroening & Frieda Williams	Walt Schmuhl & Keith Stevens	Brad and Marilyn Frey	Eric and Deb Standen	Scott and Lindsay Gaspari
Acolyte	Eric Burrow	Molly Becker	Brandon Burrow	Grant Gacek & Ava Osgood	Brooke Henderson	Mia & Alaina Bradley	OPEN	Meredith Gacek & Addison Osgood
Nursery 1st	Deb Standen	Darlene Kiessel	Mary Alice Brunner	Judi Huff	Jenna Henderson	Kate Kohs	Allison Rood	Molly Becker
Nursery 2nd	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul
Bldg. close		TBD		Brad and Marilyn Frey		TBD		Bob Hopkins
Snacks	*Irma Gorman*		*Keith Stevens*	*Marilyn Lucy*				
Flowers			*By Krin Jurgensen in honor of family birthdays*					

February 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 9:40 a.m. SCS Classes						**1** 9:00 a.m. Men's Devotion/Breakfast at the Galley Grill
2 *Worship/Learning Schedule Above* Installation of Council Members	**3** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**4** 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**5** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**6** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**7**	**8** 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting
9 *Worship/Learning Schedule Above* 6:30 p.m. "1st Sunday" Book Discussion Group	**10** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 6:00 p.m. Support Committee Meeting Newsletter articles due	**11** 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**12** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 7:00 p.m. Deborah Circle Meeting at Church	**13** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**14** Valentine's Day	**15**
16 *Worship/Learning Schedule Above* 3:45 p.m. Dorcas Hymn Sing for Singers and Listeners	**17** Presidents Day 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**18** 4:00 p.m. Vasa Meeting 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**19** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**20** 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**21**	**22**
23 *Worship/Learning Schedule Above*	**24** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**25** 6:00 p. m. Men's Bible Study	**26 Ash Wednesday** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 12:15 pm & 7:00 pm Worship with Communion & Imposition of Ashes	**27** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**28**	**29**